

*Application No. 10/518,553
Amendment dated November 27, 2007
Reply to Office Action of August 27, 2007*

*Docket No.0365-0616PUS1
Art Unit: 2154
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AMENDMENTS TO THE DRAWINGS

Three sheets of Replacement Drawings (FIGS. 4-6) are attached at the end of this Amendment.

REMARKS

The Applicant thanks the Examiner for the thorough consideration given the present application. Claims 7, 8, and 13 are cancelled herein without prejudice to or disclaimer of the subject matter set forth therein. Claims 1-6, 9-12, and 14-52 are pending. Claims 1, 9-12, 14, 17, 24-26, 29, 30, 32, 35, 42, and 50 are amended. Claims 1, 24, and 42 are independent. The Examiner is respectfully requested to reconsider the rejections in view of the amendments and remarks set forth herein.

Allowable Subject Matter

The Examiner states that claims 13 and 14 would be allowable if rewritten in independent form.

Applicant thanks the Examiner for the early indication of allowable subject matter in this application. In response,

independent claim 1 has been amended to incorporate the allowable subject matter of objected-to claim 13 and intervening claims 7 and 8,

independent claim 24 has been amended to incorporate the allowable subject matter of objected-to claim 13 and claims 7 and 8,

independent claim 42 has been amended to incorporate the allowable subject matter of objected-to claim 13 and claims 7 and 8.

Therefore independent claims 1, 24, and 42 are now in condition for allowance.

Examiner Interview

If, during further examination of the present application, a discussion with the Applicant's Representative would advance the prosecution of the present application, the Examiner is encouraged to contact Carl T. Thomsen, at 1-703-208-4030 (direct line) at his convenience.

Drawings

In response to the Examiner's objection to the drawings, three sheets of Replacement Drawings (FIGS. 4-6) are attached at the end of this Amendment.

Claim for Priority

The Examiner has not acknowledged the Applicant's claim for foreign priority based on EP 03396036.0. Clarification is respectfully requested in the next official communication.

Information Disclosure Citation

The Applicant thanks the Examiner for considering the reference supplied with the Information Disclosure Statement filed December 22, 2004, and for providing the Applicant with an initialed copy of the PTO form filed therewith.

Claim Objections

The Examiner has objected to claims 11, 14, 17, 25, 26, 29, 30, 32, 35 and 42-52 because of several informalities. In order to overcome this objection, the Applicant has amended claims 11, 14, 17, 25, 26, 30, 32, 35, and 42 to address the deficiencies pointed out

by the Examiner. Reconsideration and withdrawal of this objection are respectfully requested.

Amendments to the Specification

In response to the Examiner's objection to the Abstract of the Disclosure, a revised Abstract is attached on a separate sheet at the end of this paper.

Rejections Under 35 U.S.C. §103(a)

Claim 1-3, 5, 15-23, and 42-52 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Blott et al. (U.S. 6,449,618) in view of Official Notice; and

claims 4, 6-12, and 24-41 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Blott et al. (U.S. 6,449,618) in view of Official Notice, and further in view of Krishnamurthy et al. (U.S. 6,421,676).

These rejections are respectfully traversed.

Amendments to Independent Claims 1, 24, and 42

As noted above, and while not conceding the appropriateness of the Examiner's rejection, but merely to advance prosecution of the instant application,

independent claim 1 has been amended to incorporate the allowable subject matter of objected-to claim 13 and intervening claims 7 and 8,

independent claim 24 has been amended to incorporate the allowable subject matter of objected-to claim 13 and claims 7 and 8,

independent claim 42 has been amended to incorporate the allowable subject matter of objected-to claim 13 and claims 7 and 8.

At least for the reasons explained above, the Applicant respectfully submits that the combination of features set forth in each of independent claims 1, 24, and 42 is not disclosed or made obvious by the prior art of record, including

Therefore, independent claims 1, 24, and 42 are in condition for allowance.

Dependent Claims

All dependent claims are in condition for allowance due to their dependency from allowable independent claims, or due to the additional novel features set forth therein.

Accordingly, reconsideration and withdrawal of the rejections under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) are respectfully requested.

CONCLUSION

Since the remaining patents cited by the Examiner have not been utilized to reject claims, but merely to show the state of the art, no comment need be made with respect thereto.

All of the stated grounds of rejection have been properly traversed, accommodated, or rendered moot. It is believed that a full and complete response has been made to the outstanding Office Action, and that the present application is in condition for allowance.

If the Examiner believes, for any reason, that personal communication will expedite prosecution of this application, he is invited to telephone Carl T. Thomsen (Reg. No. 50,786) at (703) 208-4030(direct line).

If necessary, the Commissioner is hereby authorized in this, concurrent, and future replies to charge payment or credit any overpayment to Deposit Account No. 02-2448 for any additional fees required under 37 C.F.R. §§1.16 or 1.17, particularly extension of time fees.

Respectfully submitted,
BIRCH, STEWART, KOLASCH & BIRCH, LLP

November 27, 2007

By 
James M. Slattery
Reg. No. 28,380
P. O. Box 747
Falls Church, VA 22040-0747
#43,368
JMS:CTT:ktp 
(703) 205-8000

Attachments: Three Sheets of Replacement Drawings
Revised Abstract of the Disclosure